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Management issues: technical cooperation activities of ESCAP and announcement of intended contributions

Overview of technical cooperation activities and extrabudgetary contributions

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document provides an overview of the secretariat's technical cooperation work in 2013. It (a) highlights trends in development cooperation, (b) describes steps taken by the secretariat to strengthen its technical cooperation work, and relations with partners and donors, (c) provides a summary of financial contributions made available to the secretariat in 2013 for technical cooperation work, and (d) offers examples of the results of the secretariat's capacity development work that have been achieved in collaboration with some of its key partners. The Commission may wish to review the present document and provide the secretariat with guidance on the development, direction and priorities of its technical cooperation work.

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I. Trends and developments in the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in 2013

A. Introduction

1. The spotlight of the international development community is currently on forging a new global partnership as a core strategy and essential prerequisite for the implementation of the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and the final push to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It is in that context that the Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, while calling for a new spirit of solidarity, cooperation and mutual accountability, identified a new global partnership for sustainable development as one of the most important transformative shifts required for the era after 2015.[1]

2. Despite the economic growth generated in Asia and the role played by the region as the engine of the global economy, many pressing development challenges remain that require more than just the efforts of individual Governments or organizations. This is why the new global partnership needs to involve Governments at the core, while including people living in poverty, those with disabilities, women, civil society and indigenous and local communities, traditionally marginalized groups, multilateral institutions, local government, the business community, academia and private philanthropists.

3. The financial crisis and euro zone turmoil have, over recent years, led many Governments to implement austerity measures and reduce their official development assistance (ODA) budgets. In 2012, members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provided $125.6 billion in net ODA, representing 0.29 per cent of their combined gross national income (GNI) and

[1] See *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development. The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Available from www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf.

a 4.0 per cent drop in real terms compared to 2011, although a moderate recovery is expected to have occurred in 2013.[2]

4. Creative approaches to partnerships, pulling in financial resources while tapping into synergies, knowledge and skills, have become critical for the delivery of the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in times of decreasing ODA levels. In this context, the secretariat's technical cooperation work in 2013 continued to be guided by a set of higher-level overarching capacity development project documents. These documents emphasize, among other things, the achievement of results through strengthened results-based management, the need for a strong focus on monitoring and evaluation, and the need to build strong partnerships with various stakeholders, particularly in the light of South-South cooperation, which is at the heart of the mandate and work of ESCAP.

B. Enhancing coordination with other United Nations agencies

5. Strong partnerships and coordination with other agencies in the United Nations system — within the framework of system-wide coherence and the United Nations "Delivering as One" approach at the regional level — are vital to ensure the effectiveness of the capacity development work of ESCAP. The Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM), convened and serviced by ESCAP, and in particular its seven thematic working groups, continued to be the key vehicle for enhancing partnerships in 2013. Engagement of the secretariat in the work of the United Nations Development Group Asia-Pacific (UNDG A-P), which focuses on United Nations coordination and coherence at the country level, continued to provide another important means of enhancing cooperation with United Nations counterparts in 2013.

6. ESCAP partnerships for capacity development are further underpinned by memoranda of understanding that provide frameworks for cooperation. By the end of 2013, more than 30 such memoranda were in place with United Nations entities and other international and regional organizations. A detailed report on the efforts of the secretariat to enhance coordination with other United Nations agencies, including through RCM, UNDG A-P and other cooperation arrangements, is provided in the report on the evaluation activities of ESCAP during the biennium 2012-2013.[3]

C. Mobilizing resources and partnerships

7. The secretariat implemented a number of measures and actions during 2013 to further develop relations and collaboration with development partners and donors. These included: (a) an annual consultation meeting with the Asian Development Bank to review the joint thematic priority areas of work that include the Millennium Development Goals, water, environment, climate change, statistics, social protection and regional connectivity; (b) a donor-relations mission to the Republic of Korea to strengthen relations with

[2] *Source*: OECD Development Assistance Committee aid statistics. Available from www.oecd.org/dac/stats. *Note*: Information on ODA for 2013 was not yet available when the present report was drafted.

[3] E/ESCAP/70/20.

key partners;[4] (c) discussions with other existing and potential donors, including China, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the European Union, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Hilti Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation; (d) a donor-relations mission to Germany to explore options for broadening and deepening cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ); (e) a donor-relations mission to Brussels which included meetings with the European Commission (EuropeAid and selected sectoral directorates-general) and participation in the European Development Days 2013; (f) missions to China and Japan which included discussions with key partner agencies of ESCAP; and (g) customized training sessions for three regional institutions of ESCAP that focused on developing resource mobilization and project management skills of the staff.[5]

8. To underpin such initiatives, the secretariat continued to develop and improve tools to enhance its visibility with and outreach to partners and donors, including through an internal donor profile system that went online in March 2013.

9. The importance of the business sector as one of the key partners of the secretariat in promoting and delivering capacity development is increasing. In this context, ESCAP continued to work in 2013 with, among others, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., the Hilti Foundation and the Nippon Foundation. The secretariat continues to pursue new partnership opportunities in 2014 with a range of global and regional business sector entities.

II. Delivering the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in 2013

A. Contributions to the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in 2013

10. In 2013, the secretariat's technical cooperation programme continued to focus on capacity development that encompassed: (a) policy advocacy and dialogue on critical and emerging issues, including follow-up to global and regional commitments; (b) regional knowledge networking aimed at enabling the members and associate members of ESCAP to share and discuss information and experiences on good and innovative practices; and (c) training, advisory services and other forms of technical assistance aimed at strengthening the capacity of the members and associate members of

[4] The following 15 government agencies in the Republic of Korea are donors and partners of ESCAP in its delivery of the technical cooperation programme: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Korea International Cooperation Agency; Ministry of Unification; Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning; Korea Communications Commission; Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs; Korea Expressway Corporation; Korea Rail Network Authority; Korea Transportation Safety Authority; Korea Energy Economics Institute; Ministry of Strategy and Finance; Ministry of Environment; Statistics Korea; Ministry of Health and Welfare; and Rural Development Administration.

[5] The sessions were conducted at the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. Similar training sessions for the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development are planned for 2014.

ESCAP to formulate and implement effective policies and programmes in a range of key development areas.

11. The ESCAP technical cooperation programme in 2013 was funded from both the regular budget of the United Nations and extrabudgetary resources. The regular budget comprised: (a) the regular programme of technical cooperation (section 23); and (b) the United Nations Development Account (section 36). Extrabudgetary resources included voluntary contributions provided by individual Governments, entities of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Such contributions were provided as cash (funds-in-trust) or assistance in kind.

12. The total cash contributions received by ESCAP in 2013 for technical cooperation, from sources within and outside the United Nations, amounted to $19.5 million, representing an increase of 9.1 per cent over that of 2012. Bilateral voluntary cash contributions by ESCAP member and non-member States remained the main extrabudgetary source of funding. A summary of the financial contributions by source in both United States dollars and percentage terms is provided in table 1.

13. Representing 51.4 per cent of the total financial contributions in 2013, the bilateral donor country contributions amounted to $10 million, of which approximately 73.5 per cent was received from developing member countries. Further details on the extrabudgetary resources (funds-in-trust) received from bilateral sources are provided in annex I. The largest overall bilateral donor contributions were received (by size of contribution) from the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Japan, Germany and China.

14. The United Nations contributed $7 million, representing 36.2 per cent of the total funds received for technical cooperation in 2013 (see table 1).

Table 1

Summary of financial contributions in 2013, by source

Source	United States dollars	Percentage
(a) Donor countries (see annex I)	10 016 640	51.4
(b) United Nations system	7 046 447	36.2
1. United Nations regular programme of technical cooperation (section 23)	2 816 700	14.5
2. United Nations Development Account (section 36)	2 621 500	13.5
3. United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies	1 608 247	8.2
(c) Other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (see annex II)	2 419 719	12.4
Total	**19 482 806**	**100.0**
Regular budget (b.1 + b.2)	5 438 200	28
Extrabudgetary contributions (a + b.3 + c)	14 044 606	72

15. Other intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and NGOs contributed $2.4 million of the total funds received in 2013. The three largest contributors under this category were the European Union, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and the Asian Development Bank. More detailed information on contributions from other intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and NGOs is given in annex II.

16. ESCAP technical cooperation work in 2013 was further facilitated by contributions in kind, such as the services of experts and the provision of host facilities and equipment. The former included a total of 94 work-months of services of experts in various disciplines provided by ESCAP member States and one NGO on a non-reimbursable loan basis. The latter included a set of assistive devices for persons with disabilities provided by the Ministry of Health and Welfare of the Republic of Korea to support ESCAP in implementing its commitment to ensuring full accessibility to its premises and facilities under General Assembly resolution 61/106 of 13 December 2006 on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Commission resolution 67/6 of 25 May 2011 on enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities at ESCAP.

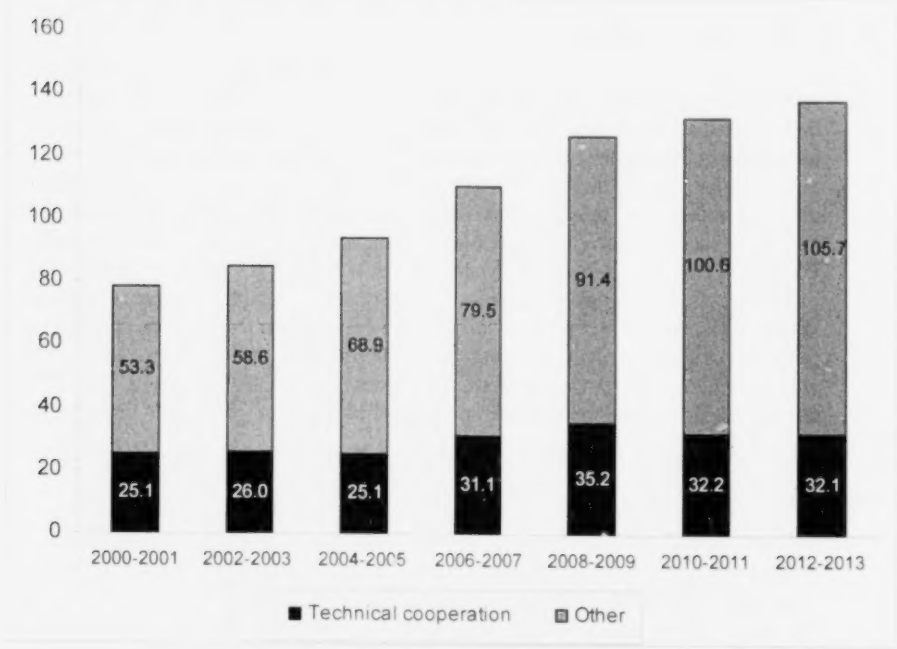
17. The volume of the secretariat's technical cooperation delivery in 2013 in financial terms totalled approximately $15.9 million.

18. The distribution of extrabudgetary resources over the eight subprogrammes of ESCAP in 2013 is shown in table 2.

Table 2
Distribution of extrabudgetary contributions to ESCAP subprogrammes in 2013
(Percentage)

Subprogramme	Contribution
1. Macroeconomic policy and inclusive development	3.0
2. Trade and investment	14.0
3. Transport	5.0
4. Environment and development	28.0
5. Information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction	26.0
6. Social development	6.0
7. Statistics	15.0
8. Subregional activities for development	3.0
Total	**100.0**

Figure
Evolution of ESCAP expenditure, 2000-2013
(Millions of United States dollars)



B. Highlights of technical cooperation work in 2013

19. Capacity development remained the main driver of the secretariat's technical cooperation work during 2013, with effective and inclusive partnerships providing strong foundations. Through various modalities, such as analytical studies, training workshops, advisory services, communities of practice, and networks to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and good practice, ESCAP continued to provide a vital platform for the sharing of knowledge, information and experience among member States within the Asian and Pacific region.

20. The secretariat endeavoured to maximize the impact of the resources, experience, skills and linkages that partners bring to the implementation of the work of ESCAP in all its subprogrammes. The diversity and scope of the partnerships that underpinned the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in 2013 are illustrated by the following selected examples of results:

(a) In cooperation with the Republic of Korea, as a major partner, together with the Governments of Japan, China and Australia, as well as business partners such as the Nippon Foundation, and in implementation of the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific,[6] ESCAP established the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022. Comprising representatives of 15 Governments and 15 civil society organizations, the Working Group adopted, in its first session, a five-year road map for the implementation of the Incheon Strategy, which outlines milestone actions to

[6] ST/ESCAP/2648.

be carried out by Governments at the national level to meet their commitments under the Incheon Strategy. ESCAP also partnered with the Government of the Republic of Korea in support of trade facilitation, transport, green growth policies and solutions, and the dissemination of capacity-building programmes on the use of information and communications technology for development;

(b) In collaboration with China, ESCAP has been implementing a regional programme to promote the economic empowerment of women, based on the South-South cooperation model. The programme promotes integration of a gender perspective into national development strategies, with a particular focus on gender-responsive budgeting, women's economic empowerment and gender-sensitive poverty eradication. The participating countries include Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. Policymakers, planners and experts from a range of sectors, including planning, finance, public works and women's affairs, enhanced their knowledge through the sharing of experiences on gender mainstreaming in policymaking and planning, and in implementing strategies to advance women's economic empowerment. Moreover, China has supported ESCAP programmes on trade facilitation, space technologies and renewable energy;

(c) Collaboration with and support from the Russian Federation was instrumental in promoting the policy, normative and capacity development work of ESCAP in support mainly of the energy and transport sectors, as well as in other joint priority areas, such as migration, statistics, information and communications technology, and disaster risk reduction. Held in Vladivostok, Russian Federation, the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum [7] adopted two outcome documents, namely: (i) the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific;[8] and (ii) the Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2018. The Russian Federation and ESCAP collaborated in order to support the development, adoption and implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports;[9] after the Asian Highway[10] and Trans-Asian Railway[11] agreements, this is the third intergovernmental agreement paving the way for enhanced transport connectivity and thereby greater trade, economic development and the movement of people in the Asia-Pacific region;

(d) In collaboration with the European Union, ESCAP made good progress in promoting sustainable agriculture and food security in member States through the "Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia" (SATNET Asia) and by building technical and analytical capacity through technical cooperation in the area of food security and poverty reduction. As part of its initiative to improve monitoring and

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[7] In addition to the annual voluntary contribution made by the Russian Federation, in the amount of $1.2 million in support of the ESCAP technical cooperation programme, the Russian Federation contributed $1,103,600 to the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, of which $685,456 was designated for technical cooperation.

[8] See E/ESCAP/70/28.

[9] ESCAP resolution 69/7 on the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. The Agreement was signed by 14 countries during the second session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport in November 2013, with Thailand being the first party to ratify the Agreement.

[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2323, No. 41607.

[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2596, No. 46171.

evaluation, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable also developed a knowledge-attitude-practice-based assessment method, which is now being applied and used for all training events to analyse how much of the knowledge gained from training events is actually being put into practice;

(e) Partnering with the Government of Germany, in particular GIZ, ESCAP initiated, in 2013, the multi-year project on Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: The Urban Nexus. The project supports 10 cities in six countries, namely China, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, by providing policy options, technical advice and examples of good practice in the utilization of the nexus linkages among water, energy and food security at the city level and the potential co-benefits arising from integrated resource management and planning for cities. GIZ and ESCAP also teamed up in support of the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries. The Fund helped to build tsunami early warning capacity at various levels in a number of countries, including Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar and Timor-Leste;

(f) With the support of the Government of Japan, ESCAP promoted the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Applications of Space Technology and Geographic Information Systems for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development 2012-2017.[12] ESCAP provided a platform for policymakers to come up with solutions for better utilization of space technology for disaster risk reduction and management, and sustainable development; the sharing of knowledge and good practices at both regional and national levels; and identification of needs, gaps and challenges on practical and technical issues in implementing the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action;

(g) Together with 19 partners, ESCAP has developed a comprehensive and inclusive partnership for its groundbreaking regional strategy — Make Every Life Count[13] — to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region, which provide an essential national resource for recording vital events in people's lives: birth, adoption, marriage, divorce and death.

21. In addition, ESCAP continued working with a number of business sector partners, including:

(a) Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women: a programme promoting an enabling policy and legal environment for women's entrepreneurship through primary research and in-depth analysis of barriers and challenges, as well as a series of national consultations and a regional forum to develop strategies and policy options;

(b) The Hilti Foundation and a local non-governmental organization, the Homeless People's Federation Philippines: a pilot housing development project in the Philippines that promotes environmentally friendly, eco-efficient, disaster-resilient and affordable housing;

(c) The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation: a solution for cities in Asia to collect and recycle solid urban waste, introducing a revolutionary waste-disposal system in small communities using a method where up to 95 per cent of the collected waste is recycled or composted.

[12] See ESCAP resolution 69/11, annex (1 May 2013).

[13] See E/ESCAP/CST(3)/6 and Add.1; E/ESCAP/69/26.

III. Conclusions

22. Working with a wide range of partners including Governments, donor agencies, United Nations entities, other international and regional organizations and the business community, the secretariat achieved further progress in strengthening the capacity of member States to develop and implement inclusive and sustainable economic and social development policies in Asia and the Pacific.

23. In particular, further steps were taken to enhance the impact, focus and integration of the secretariat's technical cooperation work, with a notable focus on capacity development and special attention to the needs of least developed, landlocked developing and Pacific island developing countries. Additional steps were taken to increase and diversify the secretariat's resource-mobilization capabilities and partnership base. Enhancing relations with key partners and donors through regular communication and engagement remained at the core of the secretariat's resource mobilization efforts.

24. The secretariat will continue to strengthen the application of results-based management approaches to ensure that maximum impact is achieved from its technical cooperation work with member States. Recommendations and lessons identified through evaluations and evaluative reviews will be actively drawn upon to strengthen performance and results. Furthermore, the secretariat will continue to create the necessary strategic and operational synergies with United Nations entities and subregional organizations to ensure United Nations system-wide coherence at the regional level.

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Annex I

Extrabudgetary resources provided by bilateral donors in cash in 2013 (funds-in-trust)
(United States dollars)

Australia	50 000
Bangladesh	34 000
Bhutan	1 000
Brunei Darussalam	49 000
China	606 184
Fiji	10 000
Germany	885 530
Hong Kong, China	30 000
India	438 557
Indonesia	152 068
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	66 039
Japan	1 698 500
Kazakhstan	5 000
Lao People's Democratic Republic	4 000
Macao, China	93 000
Malaysia	45 027
Mongolia	15 000
Myanmar	8 000
New Caledonia	5 466
Pakistan	22 362
Papua New Guinea	7 000
Philippines	53 000
Republic of Korea	3 709 250
Russian Federation	1 885 456
Singapore	15 000
Sri Lanka	25 000
Thailand	70 000
Turkey	15 000
Tuvalu	1 200
Viet Nam	17 000
Total extrabudgetary inputs from bilateral donors	**10 016 640**

Annex II

Technical cooperation resources provided by the United Nations system and by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in 2013
(United States dollars)

1. United Nations systems	
(a) Regular budget resources	
United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (section 23)	2 816 700
United Nations Development Account (section 36)	2 621 500
Subtotal (a)	5 438 200
(b) Extrabudgetary resources	
United Nations Development Programme	119 305
United Nations Population Fund	517 876
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	829 632
International Organization for Migration	10 000
United Nations Children's Fund	60 000
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	71 434
Subtotal (b)	1 608 247
Sub-total of resources from the United Nations System (a) + (b)	**7 046 447**
2. Other organizations	
Asian Development Bank	115 871
Centre for WTO Studies (Indian Institute of Foreign Trade)	35 000
China Disabled Persons' Federation	10 000
European Union	1 738 563
Hilti Foundation	13 560
Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency	182 628
Korea Disabled People's Development Institute	50 000
Korea Energy Economics Institute	27 685
Korea Internet and Security Agency	72 500
Korea Maritime Institute	26 087
The Nippon Foundation	87 300
University of Hohenheim	6 522
World Trade Organization	54 004
Subtotal of extrabudgetary resources from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations	**2 419 719**
Grand total	**9 466 166**

Annex III

Extrabudgetary assistance in kind (non-reimbursable loans) in 2013

Japan
(Total 12 work-months)

Mr. Michio Ito
Expert on Disaster Reduction
Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
12 work-months

Republic of Korea
(Total 82.0 work-months)

Mr. Won-Tae Kim
Expert on Environment Policy
Environment and Development Division
1 work-month

Mr. Myung Soo Yoo
Expert on Environment Policy
Environment and Development Division
8.5 work-months

Mr. Yousik Kim
Expert on Space Technology
Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
0.5 work-month

Mr. Kwang Dong Kim
Expert on Information and Communications Technology
Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
12 work-months

Mr. Bong Seok So
Expert on Regional Cooperation in North-East Asia, with particular focus on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division
12 work-months

Mr. Jehak Jang
Expert on Programme Management
Programme Planning and Partnerships Division
12 work-months

Mr. Young Hun Jeong
Expert on Social Policy
Social Development Division
12 work-months

Mr. Jun Ho Shin
Expert on Regional Trade and Monetary Cooperation
Trade and Investment Division
12 work-months

Mr. Kim Hyung-Suk
Expert on Railway Transport
Transport Division
12 work-months